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ABSTRACT

This practicum report describes a 13-week intervention that facilitated the participation of parents of 16 preschoolers in the instruction of their children. Objectives of the intervention were that: (1) parents and children would participate in take-home projects and workshops; (2) parents and children would increase the amount of time they spent together every week performing developmentally appropriate problem-solving activities; and (3) parents would increase the amount of time they spent in volunteer classroom activities. Every week, each child was to take home a "parent suitcase" that contained developmentally appropriate materials relating to a particular type of activity. Children were to work on the materials with their parents and return the "suitcase" the following week. The intervention also involved discussion groups and workshops on developmentally appropriate practices for parents. Results indicated that all parents and children participated in the use of the "parent suitcase." Nearly 70 percent of parents increased the amount of time they spent with their children in developmentally appropriate activities as measured by pre- and postintervention questionnaires. Parents exhibited an increase of 165 percent in classroom volunteer time. Appendices include a copy of the parent questionnaire, copies of communications to parents, checklists relating to the "suitcases," and descriptions of activities contained in the "suitcases." Some materials from the "suitcases" are also attached. (BC)

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# DEVELOPING APPROPRIATE ACTIVITIES WITH EARLY INTERVENTION PREKINDERGARTEN FAMILIES TO PREPARE CHILDREN FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

by

Shirley I. Schnettler

A Practicum Report

Submitted to the Faculty of the Center for Advancement of Education of Nova University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science

The abstract of this report may be placed in a National Database System for reference.

June/1992

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Abstract

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Children are coming to school unprepared for the activities and experiences that await them. There was a need to design and implement strategies to increase parental involvement and to improve parental ability to provide developmentally appropriate activities for children. "Parent Suitcases" were developed. The suitcases contained appropriate games, activities, and suggestions for using the materials. There were 16 suitcases, one for each child each week of the project. By working together, parents became aware of what was developmentally appropriate for the age of their children. Make-and-take workshops were an integral part of the strategy. As a result of this implementation, parents and children participated in the home activities and/or workshops which encouraged parental involvement. The activities and materials from the suitcases were organized into a handbook and distributed to the prekindergarten teachers in Pinellas County. The "Parent Suitcase" idea was selected for presentation at the Summer Conference for Young Children, Early Experiences: Equity & Excellence, in Tampa on July 24, 1992. Appendices include the Parent Questionnaire for Developmentally Appropriate Practices, a list of suitcase supplies, parent letters, evaluative instruments, and projects from the parent workshops.

## Authorship Statement

I hereby testify that this paper and the work it reports are entirely my own. When it has been neccessary to draw from the work of others, published or unpublished, I have acknowledged such work in accordance with accepted scholarly and editorial practice. I give testimony freely, out of respect for the scholarship of other professionals in the field and in the hope that my own work, presented here, will earn similar respect.

Shirley J. Schmeltzer
student's signature

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# CHAPTER I

## Purpose

### Background

This practicum proposal was designed as a parent-child activity for four-year-old preschoolers. The site was located in an urban area shown to have a black population of up to 49.0 percent according to the 1990 census (Adair, 1991). Total school enrollment was 387 children, from prekindergarten through fifth grade. There were 18 full-time classroom teachers and 11 auxiliary-support teachers on staff. Prekindergarten units had a limit of 16 children with a teacher and a paraprofessional in every classroom. The teacher pupil ratio was eight. Since every elementary school in the county did not have a prekindergarten program, out-of-district children were allowed to enter

schools nearest them. At this site, 56 percent of the children in class were enrolled with Special Attendance Permits.

The target group included seven girls and nine boys (nine black and seven white). One bi-lingual child was enrolled. Family demographics indicated 10 one-parent and six two-parent families. Five of the adults in one-parent families were employed. In the two-parent families, at least one parent in each family was working. Total number of children in the 16 families was 49. Siblings in both groups ranged in age from one to 16. Ten of the siblings were under age four. All families in the program were at the poverty level. Every child in the class was considered at risk and qualified for the free lunch program.

Parent participation is essential to the success of High/Scope prekindergartens. The curriculum includes staff work with families, supporting their strengths and encouraging the development of their parenting skills. Early childhood educators feel that schools must reach

out to families by providing supportive and educational programs for parents, as well as meeting the comprehensive needs of children. Simply, schools must serve the whole child (Kagan, 1989). This type of support was incorporated into the practicum project.

The author's role as classroom teacher was to provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum, rich in experiences, that would stimulate the child's imagination and encourage communication between child and parent. An orderly environment was provided where strong self-image, problem solving, and decision making were vital components. Each child was actively engaged in the learning process in an atmosphere of moral and ethical behavior, where they could develop values to improve the quality of life. The author had to be a role model for language, attitudes, and behavior. Interaction, assistance, and response to the needs of parent and child was essential. In this project, the author facilitated the acquisition of materials, parental activities, and practical applications of varied teaching methods.

Parent workshops utilized group problem-solving techniques as new strategies were created and materials developed for working with children at home.

Problem Statement

The many changes in society have resulted in a difficult partnership between school and home. A decline in the marriage rate and an increase in the divorce rate multiplied single-parent families. In addition to dual-earner families, there was also an increase in the number of families considered below the poverty level (Chavkin, 1989). These conditions have led to children being left with insufficient parental influence or nurturing. Children are coming to school unprepared for the activities and experiences that await them. Parents are the child's earliest teachers. Asking parents to work with their children does not mean that the parents know what to do or how to do it. Children have not received the support from home that is necessary for success.

Parents should be involved in their child's education. Meaningful increases in student achievement have been directly related to parent involvement. Teachers and parents have supported the idea of parent involvement in the schools. Seventy-seven percent of parents questioned in a study by Chavkin and Williams (1989) thought parents should be given activities to do at home with their children. The authors concluded that parents had simillar attitudes about other parent-involvement activities.

Parents should be prepared to work with their children. Educators felt that parents wanted to help but many times did not know how to help. Equal priorities have to be given to the education of the parent. Some parents lacked parenting skills while others had ideas that were inappropriate (Hayner, 1988). These parents were not aware of developmentally appropriate practices and activities.

Children at risk should be in an effective intervention program. In a study by Burkett (1982), parents were assisted in working with

their own children by trained paraprofessionals. The families were visited either every week or every other week. Significant differences were found in the achievement scores of the experimental groups and the control group which received no help at all. The author concluded that early home intervention made a difference in the achievement of preschoolers.

Often parents are not properly involved in the education of their children. There was a need to design and implement strategies to improve parental ability to provide developmentally appropriate activities for their children. The school must extend classroom experiences into a child's home. Many parents were willing to spend time with their children but were not aware of appropriate practices for the home setting. Early intervention programs have to recognize families and their value systems when designing such interactions. The family needs to be the focal point for a child's growth and development (Winter, 1991).

The problem is that at-risk children are not prepared for school. The parents' inability to provide fundamental skills often resulted from their own school failures, teenage pregnancies, and poverty in crime-ridden neighborhoods. This cycle of poverty is perpetuated by low self-esteem, illiteracy, welfare dependence, and the breakup of the family structure. Parent education and increasing involvement may begin to address these social ills and subsequently improve the child's chances of success.

Data from the Perry Preschool Project (High/Scope, 1986), showed that up to 50 percent of at-risk children entering kindergarten had been enrolled in special education classes. Early intervention programs with parent involvement reduced that number. Observations by special education coordinators, prekindergarten supervisors, school administrators, and early childhood teachers (i.e., prekindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade) at this site, indicated that the number of children staffed for special education classes continues to increase.

Professionals at the state level also recognized the need to reduce the rate of kindergarten children requiring special classes. In 1990, 5.6 percent of the children entering kindergarten across the state of Florida needed special education. The goal is to decrease the rate to 4 percent or one of every 25 children (Florida Department of Health And Rehabilitative Services and Florida Department Of Education, 1991). Since the above figures included all children, one must infer that those at risk would have a significantly higher percentage requiring special education placement.

The percentages at the project school site far exceeded the statewide average. Over 23 percent of kindergarten children (N=11) were enrolled in special education classes. Almost one out of every four required some form of intervention. Grade one placements increased significantly. Approximately one third (32.3 percent) of the first grade pupils (N=21) attended remediation classes.

Training parents might give them the necessary knowledge and ability to teach needed skills. Since many of the children at the current site have younger siblings, the target parents may not only increase the chances of success for the current pupils but also their younger children. Developmentally appropriate activities should be taken home and shared by the family.

The target group was a prekindergarten classroom of 16 children ranging in age from 4.5 to 5.5 and their families. All were considered at risk and qualified for the free lunch program. There were two prekindergartens at the site. The target group was the author's class. Ten children in the target group were in one-parent homes in which 50 percent of the parents worked. The remaining six children were in two-parent homes with at least one adult who worked in each family. There were a total of 49 children in these 16 families with 20.4 percent of the children (N=10) under preschool age.

Outcome Objectives

It is essential that educators facilitate the active participation of parents in the instruction of their children. An environment must be created so that both parent and child work together to their mutual benefit. Parents need to come to the classroom as partners. Working with parents can result in a more positive and supportive attitude toward school and its programs.

Some goals for parents to attain include increasing classroom participation, expanding interaction with the children, demonstrating positive reinforcement, recognizing developmentally appropriate activities, and using problem-solving skills. Children should be encouraged to explain and discuss classroom projects. They should explore materials and discover new activities. These daily goals practiced by parents and teachers will prepare children for future success.

1. During the 13 week action phase of the project, 100 percent of the parents and children

will participate in the take home projects and/or workshops as shown by circulation records and attendance.

2. During the 13 week project, 75 percent of the parents and children in the prekindergarten class will increase time together by an hour per week, using developmentally appropriate problem-solving activities, as shown by the Parent Questionnaire for Developmentally Appropriate Practices (PQDAP) results (Appendix A:55).

3. A greater cooperation will develop between school and home, during and after this 13 week project, indicated by parents spending more time in support of the prekindergarten program as determined by a 50 percent increase in volunteer time.

# CHAPTER II

## Research and Solution Strategy

This practicum was organized to explore the relationship of early intervention on parent and school. In particular, parent education and involvement on the achievement of young children were reviewed in this chapter. The major areas examined were (a) the effects of home visits and parent participation on achievement, (b) the impact of the community and working parents on involvement, and (c) the role of attitudes and behaviors in school/home cooperation and communication.

### Research

In the first section, the home visits and parent participation are discussed. Parents in these studies were provided with the knowledge and understanding needed to work with their children

through home visits by paraprofessionals. Informational meetings were also held to discuss varied practices.

The effects of home visits on achievement of preschool students were addressed in a study by Burkett (1982). The hypothesis suggested the frequency of home visits would affect the achievement of the children. Participants in the program were considered disadvantaged and potential low achievers. The researcher examined four-year-old children.

The sample (N=166) was divided into three groups. The first experimental group consisted of children in families visited each week. The second experimental group was visited every two weeks. The third was a control group tested at the beginning and the end of the school year. None of the children in the three groups participated in any other early intervention programs. The home visits were made by trained paraprofessionals. They worked with the children and parents. The main purpose of the program was

to assist parents in working with their own children.

Few differences were found in achievement scores for children who were visited every week or every two weeks. However, significant differences were found in achievement scores of the two experimental groups and the control group. The author concluded that early home intervention did make a difference in achievement of preschoolers.

Parent participation in a preschool program was examined in research by Terrisse and Joly (1986). A primary objective of the report was to encourage parents to actively participate in educational intervention with their preschool children. Parents of children ages three-to-five were chosen for the study in the Early Childhood Intervention Project (ECIP). Two heterogeneous groups of 30 parents were formed. The groups were made up of parents of children with and without learning difficulties. Parents were invited to attend bimonthly meetings in the Family Education Program (FEP). Session topics were behavior,

language, psychomotor abilities, reasoning, and emotional expression.

The authors concluded that the FEP sessions had a significant impact on the parents' attitudes and educational practices. Family education was a prime way to make up for a lack of early intervention services available to families with children of special needs. Preschool education should be a responsibility shared with parents.

Johnson and Walker (1991) followed a two year parent-child education program for low-income and minority children. The primary goal of the Houston Parent-Child Development Center (PCDC) was to strengthen parenting skills in order to develop child competency. The main feature of the PCDC was that parent and child participate in the program together.

Families were randomly assigned to the program (N=50) or the control group (N=87). The project started in the home after the child's first birthday. Paraprofessionals made 25 visits with the mother and provided information about infant behavior, language development, and

cognitive skills. Mother and child attended PCDC classes four days a week during the second year of the project.

In follow-up studies it was reported that PCDC program children compared favorably with two other early childhood programs that stressed parent involvement, namely, the Gordon Parent Education Infant and Toddler Program and the Perry Preschool Program. The PCDC program was demonstrated to be effective in providing a cognitively stimulating home environment. Program children were shown to be functioning above expected levels. Stimulating early home environment with encouraging and affectionate parents enhanced by participation in the PCDC were conducive to school success.

In a High/Scope Educational Research Foundation publication (1986), the Perry Preschool Project conducted in Ypsilanti, Michigan was reviewed. The curriculum used at the site of the current project is based on High/Scope principles. Students in the study were judged to be at high risk of school failure. Children (N=123) were

randomly assigned to either an experimental group or a control group. There was no intervention for the control group. The experimental group attended classes each morning. The family was visited at home each week. The home contact helped develop the concept of active learning and provided materials for activities. An environment was provided that nurtured skills and abilities rather than pressures to teach facts and figures. Parents were shown the need to respond to the developmental level of their children.

Frequent communication was encouraged and sensitivity to the needs of the whole family was a goal. Evidence concerning the benefits of this type of program indicated that,

> good early childhood programs can lead to consistent improvement in poor children's achievement throughout schooling, a reduced delinquency and arrest rate, a reduced teenage pregnancy rate, an increased employment rate at age 19, and a decreased rate of dependancy on welfare at age 19. (p. 9)

Parent and teacher collaboration were key elements of the program.

In the second section, the impact of community size and working parents on involvement are examined. The family unit in today's society is evolving. More single-parent families were found to exist. In addition, families with two working parents increased. Children attended schools far from their neighborhoods in many areas. Traveling large distances for conferences and activities may have diminished school involvement.

A study by Chavkin and Williams (1989) focused on parent involvement programs in small, medium, and large size communities. The authors questioned which attitudes and practices involved parents in the education of their children. The main objective was to enhance parent participation.

The Parent Involvement Questionnaire (PIQ) was used as the measure in this study (N=3,103). Part one was used to question attitudes of parent involvement. The respondents in every size community were in strong agreement about the importance of parent involvement. In part two,

parents were questioned about the frequency and type of parent-involvement activities in which they participated. There was general agreement among communities. The two most common activities were attending open house and helping with homework. In the last part, parents were asked for suggestions to improve participation. The highest rated proposal was giving parents more information about children's progress in school. More than 77 percent thought parents should be given activities to do at home with their children.

The authors concluded that parents had similar attitudes about parent-involvement activities. The size of the community was not crucial. Parents from all areas wanted a voice in their child's education.

The attitudes and interests of working parents toward participation in their children's education were explored by Chavkin and Williams in 1990. The researchers' aim was to determine the extent of parent involvement in relation to the

family work status. A questionnaire was used in a survey of parents (N=1,924).

Data were gathered from three types of families. The traditional family was defined as a father working full-time outside the home and a mother not employed. The single-parent family was defined as one parent working full-time outside the home. The dual-parent family was defined as both parents working full-time outside the home.

Parent involvement roles were examined. High interest existed in both traditional ( i.e., volunteer, tutor, audience) and nontraditional (i.e., advocate, co-learner, decision maker) roles. In addition, parent activities such as helping with homework and attending teacher conferences were most often mentioned by the groups. Finally, parents offered suggestions to improve involvement in schools. The two most frequent recommendations from the three family types were making parents feel more welcome at school and giving parents more information about children's success.

The authors concluded that despite the various types of working families that existed, parents still wanted to participate in their children's education. Involvement might improve if some activities could be held at more flexible times. The schools must adapt to meet the changing needs of society.

Finally, in the third section, cooperation and communication between home and school is studied. Attitudes and behaviors are compared and contrasted. Information in these studies again showed the importance of home involvement in the success of young children.

A researcher from the University of Maryland, Saracho (1985) reported on attitudes of preschool children toward reading. The purpose was to identify various factors leading to these attitudes. The author provided evidence that young children gain meaningful knowledge about written language from their environment. The study was used to examine the attitudes and to identify specific reading experiences of preschoolers.

At least four dimensions contributing to reading attitudes were established. The reading of books in general, in school, in the library, and in the classroom were identified through factor analysis. Comparisons between groups with positive and negative attitudes showed significant differences.

Computer analysis produced scores that could be useful in selecting those activities that were developmentally appropriate. Preferred activities included discussing and looking at books and pictures, and listening to and telling stories. A primary source providing these experiences was the home. Positive attitudes that have been developed early may have a strong impact over time.

The study by Knudsen-Lindauer and Harris (1989) investigated the views of parents and teachers. The two groups had different ideas about the skills to be emphasized in kindergarten. The authors' purpose was to answer two specific questions. First, what skills and abilities do parents and teachers think children should possess upon entering kindergarten? Second, what skills

and practices should be emphasized in kindergarten? The participants were teachers (N=146) and parents (N=436) who lived in urban and rural areas and were diverse ethnically, religiously, and socioeconomically.

The authors developed the Kindergarten Teacher Questionnaire (KTQ) and the Kindergarten Parent Questionnaire (KPQ) for this study. Both mothers and fathers listed counting, writing, and reading higher than teachers. Teachers ranked being independent and curious, higher than the mothers and feeling confident, higher than the fathers. Social skills were rated significantly higher by teachers, while parents placed greater emphasis on intellectual skills. The authors suggested that parent education programs and increased dialogue would establish goals and continuity between home and school.

Opposing philosophies and beliefs regarding school and home were mentioned in a study by Epstein (1986). The purpose of this report was to question parents' attitudes about, and knowledge of, school programs and teacher practices. In

order to find the answers, a questionnaire was completed by parents of children (N=1,269) in grades one, three, and five in Maryland. The teachers (N=82) included 36 as the case study group who supported and used parent participation, and 46 as a control group who did not emphasize involvement.

Parents were positive toward the elementary schools and teachers. However, parents agreed that teachers should encourage learning activities at home. Over 80 percent could help at home if shown specific activities. Some of the most important activities were reading aloud, discussing daily school events, signing homework, playing learning games, and using things at home to teach. Parent use of teacher practices at home was strongly linked to parent awareness that teachers worked hard to interest them in their children's school programs.

By often receiving ideas for activities and encouragement to help at home, parents gained knowledge about school and the instructional program. Some parents with young children or less

education themselves were found to need information about schools. Thus intervention would be necessary to involve them in learning activities at home. Teacher practices of parent involvement enhanced cooperation between school and home.

Parent programs in Tennessee were evaluated by Lueder (1989). The author reported that an initiative was developed to enhance the partnership between parents, children, and the schools. First, existing parent-involvement activities were increased and reinforced. Second, successful programs from other national areas were effectively introduced.

Phase one models emphasized early intervention and parent education. Full time home/school coordinators worked with community members to develop positive attitudes, enhance parenting skills, and improve pupil achievement. Parent education programs encouraged parents to become supportive of the educational process through social development, home visits, and information sessions. During home visits parents

were provided with materials to work with their children. Information sessions centered on parenting skills and attitudes.

Phase two models initiated three established and validated programs. Committees of educators, parents, businessmen, and other civic groups were formed to accomplish this task. These programs attempted to create overall community support for schools and to share accountability for the child's education.

A parent survey (N=1,100) was conducted to determine support and interest in the models. Over 95 percent indicated they were more involved, and better able to help their children. Over 90 percent reported student performance and attitudes had improved, and 81 percent observed a behavior improvement. The author suggested that parent involvement with their at-risk children presents an opportunity waiting to be recognized.

Solution Strategy

It has been indicated by the literature that parents are interested in the education of their

children. Participation in school and home activities can be increased by providing parental instruction and appropriate materials. Much of the research reviewed here would require additional personnel for implementation. Funds were not available for paraprofessional home visits in this project.

After consulting with prekindergarten supervisor and mentor, Donna Rippley, the author chose to provide developmentally appropriate materials for the children to be used in the home setting. The effects of home visits in the Burkett study (1982) and the information meetings conducted by Terrisse and Joly (1986) were the basis for this selected solution. Instead of a paraprofessional going into a home every week, the child brought home a "Parent Suitcase". The suitcase contained appropriate games, activities, and suggestions for using the materials. Each case provided all the supplies needed for the activities. There were 16 suitcases, one for each child each week of the project. By working together, parents became aware of what was

developmentally appropriate for the age of their children. The 16 cases explored language arts, math, science, and art. Most activities provided in the suitcases were teacher-made games. Some small props, objects, and materials were purchased.

The second part of this solution strategy included parent discussion groups as well as make-and-take workshops led by the author. Parents participated in the construction of developmentally appropriate activities and games for their children. They used everyday materials to create active learning strategies for curriculum areas. Recycleable materials (plastic bottles, caps, boxes, egg cartons, various containers, etc.) were collected for these activities by the parents. Ideas generated by the discussion groups were the basis for games and activities.

The project used a pretest-posttest design. The original PQDAP was completed by the parents of the target group at the first meeting. The final

questionnaire was completed during the last week of school.

# CHAPTER III

## Method

Prior to the action phase of the project varied props and games were collected, bought, and constructed for the suitcase (Appendix B:60). These materials were readily available at craft, grocery, and office supply stores. Extra supplies were kept on hand to repair, replace, and replenish the suitcase contents. Computer designed activity sheets were developed for each case.

During implementation of the project, the author led discussion groups at the invitational workshops in order to aid parents in teaching their children appropriate skills and behaviors. The discussion groups helped parents to become partners with the school and to create an understanding of the educational process. The home activities and subsequent parent sessions

increased collaboration between the families and school. The make-and-take workshops were designed to assist parents in helping their children gain the skills, attitudes, and behaviors necessary to succeed in school. Parent suggestions and ideas were positively reinforced, while at the same time, alternative possibilities and procedures were encouraged.

The importance of attending the initial parent meeting to introduce the "Parent Suitcases" was stressed to the subject group. The author talked to parents daily to ascertain the best day and time. Notices were sent home with the children a week before the anticipated meeting (Appendix C:62). Parent volunteers called families to remind them of the date. In this manner, parents were continuously made aware of their importance to the project.

Over eighty percent (N=13) of the target group attended. Sign-in sheets (Appendix D:67) and minutes were handled by volunteers. The PQDAP was completed before a discussion began. The PQDAP was used as a pretest to determine what

activities parents thought were developmentally appropriate. The questionnaire also noted the amount of time parents spent with their children each day.

After the purpose of the parent suitcase was presented, parents brainstormed ideas for appropriate activities using recycled objects and materials. A decision was made to save certain items to use at the next meeting. Thank you notes were sent to the parents attending the meeting.

Suitcase circulation began after the introductory parent meeting. A checklist was displayed in the room to keep an account of distribution and return (Appendix E:72). Sixteen cases were developed.

Suitcase One - Little Red Hen

Suitcase Two - Jack And The Beanstalk

Suitcase Three - Nursery Rhymes

Suitcase Four - The Three Bears

Suitcase Five - Colors

Suitcase Six - Numbers

Suitcase Seven - Patterns

Suitcase Eight - Shapes

Suitcase Nine - Sink Or Float

Suitcase Ten - Senses

Suitcase Eleven - Magnets

Suitcase Twelve - Animals

Suitcase Thirteen - Collage

Suitcase Fourteen - Painting

Suitcase Fifteen - Puppets

Suitcase Sixteen - Playdough

Children brought a suitcase home on Thursday and were to return them on the following Monday. During the course of the project, each child brought home twelve different activities. Comment cards were included each week so parents could express their ideas and note time spent with children using the games and experiences.

All suitcases were returned on time during week two. They were restocked with disposable supplies and checked to see if all other non-disposable objects were returned. This procedure was followed every week and articles were replaced when necessary.

The response from both parents and children was positive. The children were a very good

source of information. They couldn't wait to tell the class what they did, how often, and who worked with them. Projects from the cases (i.e. sink/float charts, soft/hard charts, puppets, paintings, etc.) were brought in and shared with the class on a weekly basis. The students were asked to expand on their activities in the classroom. They created their own games using ideas from the cases. Children started requesting specific suitcases.

More parents responded in person than those who completed the comment cards. It was reported that the projects were brought out whenever a visitor came into the home. Many children wanted to play with the games at every opportunity. Some brothers and sisters also played with students and the case activities.

Two parents were contacted by phone after the second week. It was obvious that the materials in the suitcase had not been used and the parents were urged to particpate. A third week passed with no participation by these children. Personal contact was made this time. The objectives of the

program were reviewed with the parents. When returning the suitcases the next week, these children proudly brought back their suitcases with projects in hand.

The parents of a bi-lingual child were contacted during the third week. The author wanted to be sure that the mother understood the project and knew what was expected of her. An interpreter had been working with the family. She related that both mother and child were learning from the activities in the suitcase.

Preparations for the make-and-take workshop were begun during the fourth week. Parent volunteers again contacted families and urged them to attend the upcoming meeting. They were reminded to bring the recycled boxes they had been saving. A news release was prepared by the Information Services Department of the school board and distributed to news services in the county (Appendix F:77).

Notices were sent home with the children on Wednesday of the fifth week. Everyday materials (i.e. boxes, tape, paper,etc.) were used at the

workshop on Friday to create box sculptures. A discussion period followed. Parents utilized group problem solving techniques to discuss appropriate activities and materials to extend classroom experiences into their homes. This meeting was attended by seven parents (43.75 percent). Direct observation data indicated that both parents and children enjoyed success with their creations. The sculptures were displayed in the hall outside the room for the whole school to view. Pictures were taken during the workshop for the class photo album.

By the sixth and seventh weeks, parent participation had increased. More mothers were coming into the classroom. Even some fathers arrived with their children in the morning and stayed to read a story or work a puzzle. The parents felt at ease and enjoyed helping and playing with the children.

It was noted that the suitcases were coming in later each week. Parent comment cards mentioned that time was too short for the many activities. An adjustment was made in the

circulation process. The children were allowed to keep the suitcase for a second week if they had not finished the activities.

A flyer was sent home with the children during the eighth week. The parents were to save materials for our next meeting (i.e. plastic bottles, paper rolls, old calendars, newspapers, bottle lids, old ribbon, yarn, etc.). These items were used for games and activities from ideas generated in the discussion group.

Distribution of suitcases continued each week. The suitcases were checked for supplies and needed repairs and replacements were made. A few new props had to be purchased.

Parents were again reminded of the next make-and-take workshop by phone and in person. This workshop took place during the ninth week. Portions of the session were videotaped by the author. Children brought in the materials that had been saved at home. Additional supplies were available (i.e. tape, string, yarn, scissors, etc.). The room was divided into seven work stations (Appendix G:79). Each station provided

all the materials for a project. The parents participated in developmentally appropriate activities with their own children. The children decided which games or toys would be made. Fourteen parents (87.5 percent) attended this meeting.

As circulation continued in the tenth week, children consistently requested certain suitcases. Definite favorites were established. Due to the popularity of Jack And The Beanstalk, and the Puppet cases, duplicates were provided so that two children a week could take these cases home. Charts and activities from the suitcases were displayed around the room.

Field trips were taken during the tenth and eleventh weeks. Parents were needed as drivers and chaperones. Each trip was accompanied by five parents (31.25 percent).

Daily volunteers continued to demonstrate cooperation into the twelfth week. Attitudes remained both positive and supportive. The parents decided to have a family picnic as a culminating activity. Food was provided by the

mothers who took complete control of cooking and serving. Eleven parents (68.8 percent) were present for the picnic.

Suitcases were returned for the last time during the thirteenth week of the project. The children were very disappointed when they learned they would not get another chance to take a case home. Parents were requested to complete the posttest PQDAP during this week.

Parent participation in the classroom proceedings, field trips, and attitudes were observed and noted. Changes were made in monitoring methods when necessary. Minutes, log book, volunteer data, circulation chart, and sign-in sheets were collected for the purpose of evaluation.

An overall assessment during the action phase of this project, indicated that parents and children participated in the take-home activities. Attendance at workshops was excellent and included mothers and fathers. There was an increase of time spent with the children by their mothers as shown by the PQDAP. There was a significant

increase in classroom volunteer time. If this project were to be continued, a modification should be made in the time frame for distribution and collection of suitcases.

# CHAPTER IV

## Results

The primary measurement instrument for this project was the PQDAP. Comparing the pre-and-post questionnaire of the target group was expected to indicate increased parent-child interaction and parental understanding of appropriate activities. Additional tools used in evaluation included the visitor/volunteer sign-in sheets, and a circulation checklist for the suitcases. Both assessments indicated parent participation.

The minutes of the invitational workshops and discussion groups cataloged ideas and signified understanding of skills. Comment and suggestion cards included in the suitcases encouraged parents to express their feelings and ideas about the project. Direct observation data were recorded in a daily log book as objective outcomes were reached by parents and children.

Objective number one, relating to participation, was evaluated using the circulation checklist for the suitcases and a frequency count of parent attendance at workshops. During the thirteen week action phase of this project, all target group families (N=16) participated in the suitcase activity in at least ten of the twelve exchange weeks as shown by the circulation chart. Ninety-three percent of the families (N=15) were represented in the three workshops as indicated by attendance records. These figures met the outcome objective of 100 percent participation.

In addition, three meeting/workshops were held prior to this project with an average attendance of five parents. During the practicum activities, three workshops were held with an average of 11 parents attending as shown by attendance records. Thus parent participation increased by 120 percent.

Objective number two, relating to the increased parent/child interaction using developmentally appropriate activities, was evaluated through the use of the PQDAP. Post

PQDAP analysis revealed that eleven (68.8 percent) parents increased time spent with their children. This did not reach the project goal of 75 percent. However, the time aspect of the objective increased significantly among this group.

Tabulated responses to the questionnaire before the project began, account for 5.14 hours a day being spent together. The post PQDAP average was 5.83 hours a day. This increase of 4.83 hours per child per week exceeded the stated goal of one hour per week.

The use of developmentally appropriate activities during this increase in time was uncertain. The postassessment of five general appropriate practices on page one of the PQDAP indicated an improvement in four areas. The majority of parents invariably used appropriate skills in discussion, play, and inquiry. Reading to the children was not practiced by the majority of parents but improved after implementation. The shared activity (excluding play) was the least reported practice by parents.

The 12 closed form preferential activities listed on page two of the PQDAP were used as corroboration. Analysis of preassessment data indicated that only four of 12 (33.3 percent) appropriate activities were recognized by a majority of the target group. Postassessment data noted a small increase to five of the 12 (41.6 percent) that were recognized by the majority as appropriate. However, it must be noted that eight of the 12 (66.6 percent) showed an increase in parental awareness after implementation.

If parents spent the increased time using activities in the suitcases, one could conclude that the activities were developmentally appropriate. It seems that the conclusions of the study by Knudsen-Lindauer and Harris (1989) also applied to these results. Parents are still concerned with academics and place greater emphasis on intellectual skills, while teachers encourage independence, curiosity, and social skills.

Objective number three, relating to increased volunteer time, was evaluated through a systematic

observation instrument counting frequency of visits and time spent in the classroom. A greater cooperation was achieved between parents, teacher, and school. Twenty-five percent of the fathers (N=4) and one hundred percent of the mothers (N=16) spent time with the children in various classroom situations. Volunteer time averaged two hours a week before the project. This number increased to 5.3 hours a week (165 percent) to exceed the objective of a 50 percent increase in parent participation.

Onr interesting observation noted a few times in the daily log related to the suitcases. It seemed that if parents themselves particularly enjoyed an activity, greater time was spent with their children on the skills in that suitcase. If that is true, further study is needed in order to more closely correlate parents' preferences and abilities to the suitcase activities.

This project had a positive impact on some parents in the target group. The families that participated gained knowledge about what is developmentally appropriate for their age child.

Informal observation showed an improvement in parent/child school attitudes. Since many of the families have younger children at home, it is hoped that these parents will use the skills acquired to also work with them.

Intervention activities based on critical thinking skills were used throughout this practicum. Students in the prekindergarten were encouraged to set goals for themselves daily. The children worked collaboratively with parents and peers. The teacher facilitator encouraged parents to brainstorm activities and use creative ideas to construct games and toys. Children and parents worked to recognize and solve problems cooperatively. Positive reinforcement and open-ended questions were techniques used with the children in the classroom setting. The materials provided in the suitcases related to the curriculum at the prekindergarten level. Activities addressed language arts, math, science, and art. All materials and activities were developmentally appropriate.

# CHAPTER V

## Recommendations

In reviewing the literature, it was found that studies consistently pointed to the success of programs involving parents. This practicum project resulted in an increase in parent involvement. The solution strategy combined home and school activities that could be readily used in other early intervention prekindergartens with similar needs.

The response by parents and children was favorable. Children came to school and shared the suitcase activities with the other students. Parents became aware of developmentally appropriate activities which made them feel more comfortable in the classroom.

Families were constantly encouraged to participate and were welcomed at school. Parents' views and comments were accepted with positive

reinforcement. These methods emphasized to parents the important role they must play in the education of their children.

The project idea of parent involvement and the development of appropriate materials should be continued next year in the same setting. The prekindergarten department in Pinellas County is considering the project for all the early intervention classes. This type of activity is applicable to all grades and subjects. Parents can work with their children in the home if they have the appropriate materials.

Some recommendations regarding the project are suggested. Of particular concern was the need to have some parts of the PQDAP refined. The open form questions led to some difficulty in analyzing the data. Also, the preferential questions relating to developmentally appropriate activities should have improved choices. A third change involves a modification in distribution. The time allotted for each suitcase was one week. Feedback indicated that more time was needed to enjoy the activities and games. Circulation of 16

cases every other week could be sufficient for an entire school year. This would allow a week between distribution to replenish supplies and replace objects, which became difficult when cases were returned late.

Initiating the activity early in the school year will enable parents and children to better avail themselves of the opportunities provided. In addition to evaluating parental involvement, it may be possible to measure the children's improvement over the period of a school year. There is also the potential to follow the current prekindergarten class in later years.

The description of activities and the inventory of supplies, taken from the suitcases used in the practicum, were combined to produce a guide for others to use as an information base for developing additional projects. This handbook was made available to other prekindergaten teachers for their own school settings at a workshop on May 19, 1992, at the Pinellas School Board Administration building. This meeting was held in

conjunction with parent coordinators, resource teachers, and program administrators.

This practicum proposal has also been selected for presentation at the Summer Conference for Young Children, Early Experiences: Equity & Excellence, in Tampa on July 24, 1992 (Appendix H:82). The conference is sponsored by the Florida Department Of Education. A videotape of a parent make-and-take workshop will be shown. A slide presentation will also be made in conjunction with a demonstration of parent suitcases.

Finally, the author is expecting to apply for one of the mini-grants available to teachers in the county. The grant would provide funds to replace materials and develop new ideas. If received, this would assure the continuation of parent involvement activities.

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# Appendices

# Appendix A

## Parent Questionnaire for Developmentally Appropriate Practices

## Appendix A

### Parent Questionnaire for Developmentally Appropriate Practices

Dear Parents,

Please take a few moments to answer these questions. Thank you.

Use numbers 1 through 3 to indicate your response.

1 Always 2 Sometimes 3 Never

_____Do you read to your child?

_____Do you discuss the day's activity with your child?

_____Do you play with your child each day?

_____Do you share activities such as cooking, experimenting, drawing, gardening, and dress up?

_____Do you encourage your child to ask questions?

_____Are you at home when your child comes home from school?

_____Does your child go to a daycare center or a babysitter after school?

How many hours of television do you think your child watches each day?_____

How many hours do you think you spend with your child each day?_____

What kind of activities do you share with your child?_____

What would you rather have your child do.....

(check one)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ___practice his/her name | or | ___draw a picture |
| ___play dress up | or | ___learn numbers |
| ___play with clay | or | ___play Nintendo |
| ___watch T.V. | or | ___paint |
| ___scribble on paper | or | ___write the ABC's |
| ___take things apart | or | ___play with puzzles |
| ___learn about the calendar | or | ___talk about today, and tommorrow |
| ___use a scissors | or | ___copy letters and numbers |
| ___color in a coloring book | or | ___use glue and tape |
| ___make up rhymes | or | ___learn to read |
| ___play outdoors | or | ___stay inside |
| ___twist, fold, or tear paper | or | ___learn how to make paper airplanes |

## Appendix A

### Parent Questionnaire for Developmentally Appropriate Practices

Dear Parents,

Please take a few moments to answer these questions. Thank you.

Use numbers 1 through 3 to indicate your response.

1 Always 2 Sometimes 3 Never

| RESULTS PRE 1 | 2 | 3 | | POST 1 | 2 | 3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 8 | 0 | _____Do you read to your child? | 7 | 8 | 0 |
| 9 | 4 | 1 | _____Do you discuss the day's activity with your child? | 10 | 5 | 0 |
| 6 | 8 | 0 | _____Do you play with your child each day? | 10 | 5 | 0 |
| 4 | 9 | 1 | _____Do you share activities such as cooking, experimenting, drawing, gardening, and dress up? | 5 | 9 | 0 |
| 10 | 5 | 0 | _____Do you encourage your child to ask questions? | 8 | 5 | 1* |
| 8 | 6 | 1 | _____Are you at home when your child comes home from school? | 9 | 3 | 1 |
| 1 | 2 | 12 | _____Does your child go to a daycare center or a babysitter after school? | 2 | 3 | 8 |
| 55/15=3.67 | | | How many hours of television do you think your child watches each day?_____ | 35.5/14=2.32 | | |

* No! She already asks too many.

72/14=5.14

How many hours do you think you spend with your child each day?_____

What kind of activities do you share with your child?_____

What would you rather have your child do.....

(check one) X= Appropriate

70/12=5.83

| PRE | | | POST |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | ___practice his/her name | or _x_draw a picture | 5 |
| 1 | _X_play dress up | or ___learn numbers | 2 |
| 7 | _X_play with clay | or ___play Nintendo | 10 |
| 10 | ___watch T.V. | or _X_paint | 3 |
| 1 | _X_scribble on paper | or ___write the ABC's | 4 |
| 3 | _X_take things apart | or ___play with puzzles | 2 |
| 4 | ___learn about the calendar | or _X_talk about today, and tommorrow | 6 |
| 2 | _X_use a scissors | or ___copy letters and numbers | 3 |
| 0 | ___color in a coloring book | or _X_use glue and tape | 2 |
| 2 | _X_make up rhymes | or ___learn to read | 2 |
| 9 | _X_play outdoors | or ___stay inside | 10 |
| 6 | _X_twist, fold, or tear paper | or ___learn how to make paper airplanes | 6 |

Note: All questions not answered by all participants.

Appendix B

Suitcases Expenses

Appendix B

Suitcase Expenses

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Books | $20.00 | Flannel | $ 3.21 |
| Props | $15.00 | Crayons | $ 1.50 |
| Beans, Jiffy Mix | $ 4.72 | Flannel Board Sets | $21.00 |
| Large Plastic Bags | $ 4.00 | Small Plastic Bags | $ 4.00 |
| Large Labels | $ 4.00 | Small Labels | $ 2.00 |
| Brown Paper Bags | $ .70 | Plastic Cups | $ 2.00 |
| Markers | $ 8.00 | Glue | $ 3.00 |
| Scissors | $ 2.00 | Masking Tape | $ 4.00 |
| Construction Paper | $ 2.00 | Fabric Glue | $ 2.00 |
| Magnetic Tape | $ 4.00 | Baster | $ 2.00 |
| Paper Towels | $ .60 | Kool-Aid | $ 2.00 |
| Flour | $ 1.00 | Salt | $ .30 |
| Oil | $ 1.00 | Paint | $ 5.50 |
| Sponges | $ 1.00 | Newsprint | $ 5.00 |
| Manila Paper | $ 5.00 | Paper Clips | $ .50 |
| Animal Cookies | $ 4.00 | Laminating Film | $15.00 |
| Stamp Pad | $ 2.00 | Ink | $ 2.00 |
| Stamp Set | $ 6.95 | Brushes | $ 2.50 |
| Craft Sticks | $ 2.00 | Buttons | $ 2.50 |
| Oak Tag | $ 2.00 | Tissue Paper | $ 2.00 |
| Yarn | $ 2.00 | Cellophane | $ 3.00 |
| Plastic Counters | $ 4.00 | Number Cards | $ 6.00 |
| Cash Register Tape | $ 1.00 | Magnet | $ 8.95 |
| | | Mag. Letters | $ 5.25 |
| Cotton Balls | $ 1.00 | Index Cards | $ 2.50 |
| Baking Pan | $ 1.50 | Suitcases (16 @ 15.99) | $256.00 |

Total Cost for 16 cases: $207.18 Contents
256.00 Suitcases
463.18

# Appendix C

## Parent Communications

## Appendix C

## Parent Communications

Ridgecrest Prekindergarten

Dear Parents,

Your child is bringing home a special activity suitcase. This suitcase contains projects that can be shared with family and friends. There are activities that you and your child can do together.

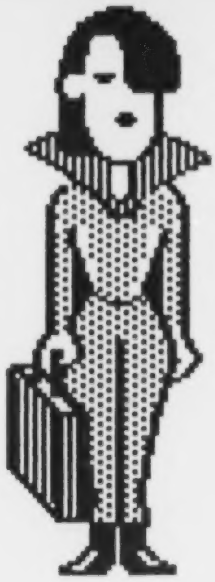
Each suitcase will contain a list of suggested activities as well as an inventory of equipment. Everything needed will be contained in the suitcase. There will be a variety of projects, activities, and games that I hope you will find interesting and fun.

The suitcase will be sent home every Thursday. Please enjoy and use the materials provided, returning the cases on the following Monday.

Thank You

Shirley Schnettler

# PLEASE COME AND JOIN US ON FRIDAY MORNING.



WE HAVE AN EXCITING NEW PROJECT.....

## PARENT SUITCASES

IT WILL ONLY TAKE A FEW MINUTES
( 15 OR 20 ).

FRIDAY MORNING - FEBRUARY 28TH

BRING YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL AND STAY FOR A LITTLE WHILE.

S. SCHNETTLER

RIDGECREST PREKINDERGARTEN

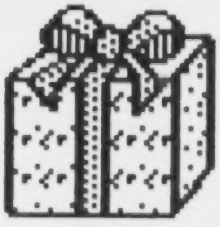
PLEASE COME AND JOIN

IN A PARENT-CHILD ACTIVITY.

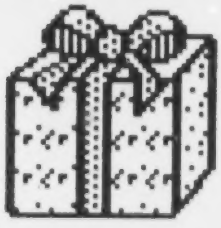
FRIDAY MORNING
MARCH 27TH

IT WILL ONLY TAKE A FEW
MINUTES ( 15 - 20)

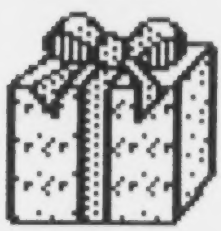
BRING YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL
AND STAY FOR A LITTLE WHILE.

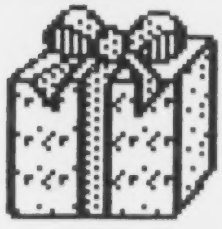


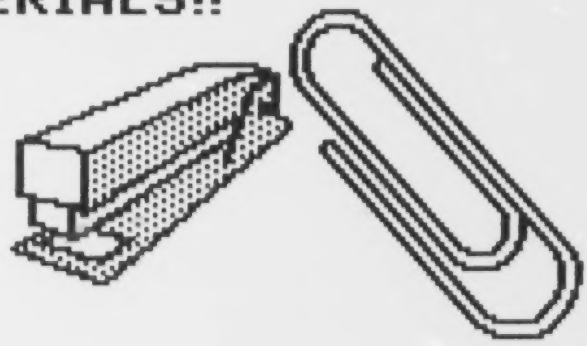
HINT!!!



WE WILL BE USING BOXES,
BOXES, AND MORE BOXES,
PLUS OTHER EXCITING
MATERIALS!!







S. SCHNETTLER

71

RIDGECREST PREKINDERGARTEN

# LAST MAKE AND TAKE CRAFT DAY!

THURSDAY MAY 7TH

COME TO SCHOOL WITH YOUR CHILD, STAY FOR A FEW MINUTES AND MAKE GAMES TO TAKE HOME.

Things to collect or save!!

gallon plastic bottles
snap clothes pins
paper rolls
bottle caps (plastic)
yarn scraps

SEND IN WHAT YOU CAN.

COME AND MAKE LOTS OF INTERESTING GAMES FOR YOUR CHILDREN.

S. SCHNETTLER
RIDGECREST PREKINDERGARTEN

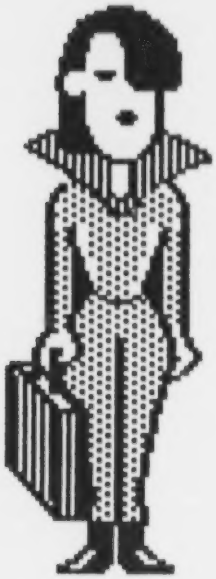
Appendix D

Sign-In Sheets

# DID YOU VOLUNTEER TODAY?

NAME _____ DATE _____ TIME _____

THANK YOU!!!!!!



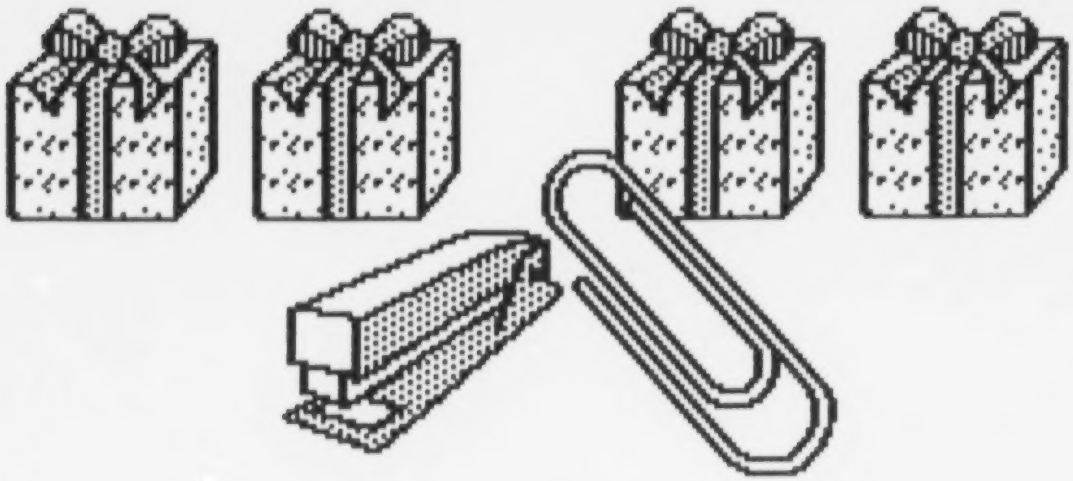
# PARENT SUITCASES

FEBRUARY 28, 1992

****PLEASE SIGN IN****



THANK YOU!!!!



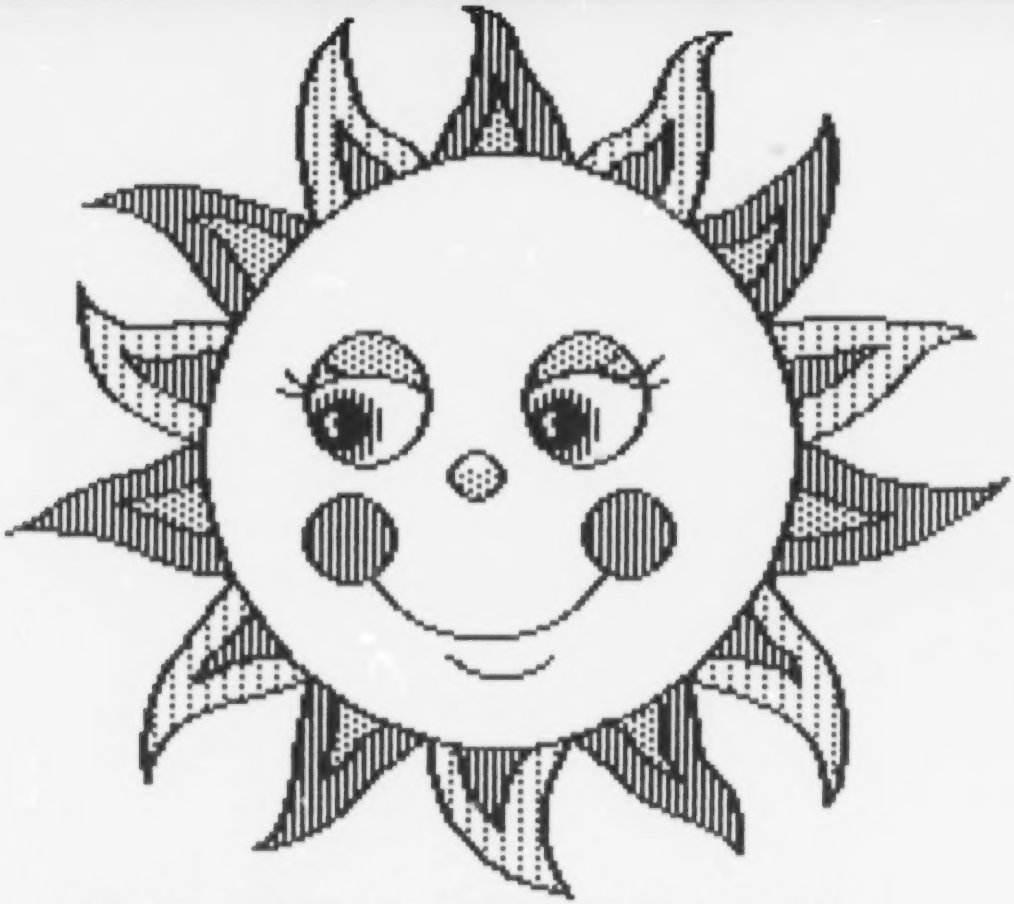
MARCH 27, 1992

PLEASE SIGN IN

---



THANK YOU!!!!



MAKE AND TAKE CRAFT DAY

MAY 7, 1992

**********PLEASE SIGN IN**********

THANK YOU!!

Appendix E

Circulation Checklist

Appendix E

Circulation Checklist

File: suitcase Page 1

| Suitcase | TURKEY | COW | DUCK | RABBIT |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Jack/Bean | X | x | x | x |
| Red Hen | X | x | x | x |
| Rhymes | | x | x | |
| Bears | x | x | | |
| Colors | X | x | | x |
| Numbers | X | | x | |
| Patterns | X | | x | x |
| Shapes | X | x | x | x |
| Sink/Float | | | x | x |
| Magnets | | x | | |
| Senses | | | x | x |
| Animals | x | | | |
| Collage | x | x | x | x |
| Painting | x | | x | x |
| Puppets | | x | | |
| Playdough | | x | | x |

Note: Children chose the animal labels that were used in place of their names.

File: suitcase Page 2

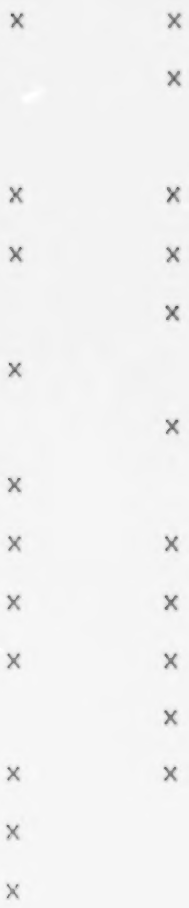
| HORSE | HIPPO | FROG | TURTLE | HEN |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| x | x | x | x | |
| x | x | x | x | x |
| x | x | | x | x |
| x | x | | | x |
| | x | x | x | |
| x | | x | x | x |
| | x | x | | |
| | x | | x | x |
| | x | x | x | x |
| x | x | x | | |
| x | | x | x | x |
| x | | | x | |
| | | | | x |
| x | x | x | x | x |
| x | | | | |
| | x | x | | x |

File: suitcase Page 3

| DOG | BEAR | BIRD | ELEPHANT | MOUSE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| x | x | x | x | x |
| x | | x | | |
| x | x | x | x | x |
| x | | x | x | x |
| x | x | x | | |
| x | x | x | x | |
| | x | x | x | x |
| x | x | | x | x |
| x | x | | | x |
| | | x | x | |
| | x | | x | x |
| x | x | | x | |
| | | | x | x |
| | | x | x | |
| x | | x | x | x |
| x | x | x | x | x |

File: sultcase Page 4

BUTTERFLYFISH



Appendix F

News Release

PINELLAS COUNTY SCHOOLS

# News



301 Fourth Street SW, Largo, Florida 34640
Information Services Department, 588-6297

**Contact: Marilyn Brown**
**588-6297 (work)**
**821-5863 (home)**

**March 20, 1992**

Curlew Creek Elementary School's Odyssey of the Mind team placed first out of more than 100 teams at the regional competition Saturday, March 7. The team will compete in the state contest Saturday, April 11 at the University of South Florida in Tampa. The state competition begins at 7:30 a.m. and concludes with an awards ceremony at 9 p.m. The contest is free and open to the public. The team's team members are fifth graders Alicia Cole, Austin Gregorzek, Jason Phillips and fourth graders Adam Myers and Jenny Tu- Wolfe. Odyssey of the Mind is a nation- divergent thinking and te-

*

Parents of prekindergarten students at Ridgecrest Elementary School will visit the classroom Friday, March 27 at 8 a.m. to help their students make sculptures out of boxes. This is the second classroom learning activity in which all parents have been asked to participate. Each Thursday, students take home a small suitcase containing learning activities for parents to do with their children at home. These activities, emphasizing greater parental involvement in the child's learning process, are part of the work that teacher Shirley Schnettler is doing through Nova University. The school is at 1901 119th St. N, Largo. For information, contact Shirley Schnettler, 588-3580.

re- ..edog from the
of S ..oms representatives, a
Vicci .. and the rap music group 3BOK. The city
.or more information, contact Peggy Hooper or Sue

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The next meeting of the Pinellas County School Board will be Wednesday, March 25 at 9 a.m. in the board room of the old administration building, 1960 E Druid Road, Clearwater. Citizens may speak to any item on the agenda by registering five minutes before the item is introduced. If you have questions regarding the complete agenda, contact Marilyn Brown, public information officer, 588-6297.

more

# Appendix G

## Make-And-Take Activities

## Appendix G

### Make-And-Take Activities

1. Peanut Butter Bird Feeder
   Spread peanut butter on a paper roll. Roll in bird seed. Punch two holes at one end. Thread yarn through holes to make a hanging loop. Hang in tree.

2. Water Bottle Pail And Scoop
   Cut a gallon water or milk bottle in half. Punch holes in two opposite sides of the bottom half of the bottle. Thread yarn through holes to make a handle. Top of bottle becomes scoop. Remove the cap and use as a funnel.

3. Ball Toss
   Cut a gallon or milk bottle in half. Put bottom of bottle aside for next project. Roll newspaper into a ball about 3" in diameter. Cut a piece of yarn or string to a length of 1 yard. Wrap one end of the yarn around the newspaper ball. Wrap ball with masking tape, covering the yarn. Attach other end of yarn to handle of top part of water bottle. To play, hold bottle top in your hand with ball hanging down on length of yarn. Move bottle top up, swinging the ball upwards. Try to catch the ball in the bottle top.

4. Wind Sock
   Use the bottom half of a milk or water bottle. Punch holes in two opposite sides of the container. Thread yarn through holes to make a hanging loop. Cut out the bottom of the container. Staple, glue, or tape 1 foot lengths of ribbon all around the bottom opening of the container.

5. Puzzles
Take an old calendar picture and draw 2/3 lines across the picture with a marker. Cut on the lines to make a puzzle.

6. Clothes Pin Match
Cut a used cereal box into rectangular pieces. Write large numbers, letters, or words on the pieces. Write matching numbers, letters, or words on each clothes pin. Clip clothes pins to their match.

7. Binoculars
Tape two paper rolls together, side by side. Punch two holes at one end of the rolls. Thread yarn through the holes for a neck strap.

Appendix H

Florida Department Of Education
Summer Conference

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Betty Castor
Commissioner of Education

May 29, 1992

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Shirley Schnettler

FROM: Mary E. Bryant, Director
Office of Early Intervention & School Readiness

SUBJECT: Early Experiences: Equity & Excellence Conference

We are happy to inform you that your proposal:

Involving Parents in Developmentally Appropriate Activities Using Parent Suitcases

has been selected for presentation at the Summer Conference for Young Children, Early Experiences: Equity & Excellence in Tampa, July 22-24, 1992. The conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency, Two Tampa City Center.

All sessions are one hour in length. Your presentation is scheduled for Friday, July 24, 1992, 8:30 a.m.-9:30 a.m. in Buccaneer B. The seating capacity of the meeting room assigned to you is for 1o0 participants. Please bring sufficient handouts for the participants and one extra for the Conference Coordinator, Frankie Allen.

Regarding your request for audio-visual equipment, we will provide the following:

Overhead Projector, Slide Projector with automatic sync

If you no longer need this equipment or require additional equipment, please call Frankie Allen at (904) 922-5300.

As the first presenter listed on the proposal form, please notify the other presenter(s) of the date, time and place. You and your co-presenters will be registered for the conference. You are responsible for your own hotel reservations. These reservations should be made by June 26th. You may contact the Hyatt Regency by calling (813) 225-1234. Please let them know that you are attending the Florida Department of Education Summer Conference.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to seeing you in Tampa, July 22-24, 1992!

MEB/fa

Attachments

# PARENT SUITCASES

Developed by

Shirley Schnettler

Prekindergarten Teacher

Pinellas County Schools

May 1992

Some children are coming to school unprepared for the activities and experiences that await them. There is a need to design and implement strategies to improve parental involvement and their ability to provide developmentally appropriate activities for their children. Parents are interested in the education of their children. Participation in school and home projects can be increased by providing parental instruction and appropriate materials. The school needs to extend classroom experiences into a child's home.

Parent suitcases will provide ideas and materials to be used at home by parent and child. The suitcase contains appropriate games, activities, and suggestions for using the materials. Each case contains all the supplies needed for the activities. These activities will assist parents in becoming aware of what is developmentally appropriate for the age of their children. Sixteen cases explore language arts, math, science, and art.

# LANGUAGE ARTS

## Suitcase #1 The Little Red Hen

Storyboard
Small animal characters
Stick puppets
Baking pan
Jiffy Mix
Book: The Little Red Hen

## Suitcase #2 Jack And The Beanstalk

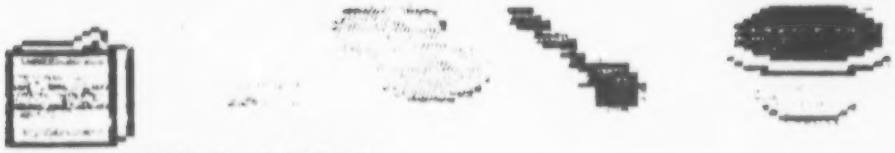
Magnetic story characters
Fabric glue
Fabric
Beans
Clear plastic cup
Paper towel
Book: Jack And The Beanstalk

## Suitcase #3 The Three Bears

Storyboard
Three plastic bears
Goldilocks
Magnetic story characters
Three bowls (small, medium, large)
Book: Goldilocks And The Three Bears

## Suitcase #4 Nursery Rhymes

Flannel board characters
Flannel
Match the rhyme cards (i.e., clock/mouse, pail/well, egg/wall)
Props (i.e., egg, pail, shoe)
Discussion pictures
Books: Mother Goose
The Mother Goose Book



# LITTLE RED HEN

## POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES

READ THE STORY

HAVE CHILD RETELL THE STORY WITH STICK PUPPETS

RETELL THE STORY USING THE STORY BOARD AND THE ANIMALS

BAKE BREAD

## WHAT'S IN THE SUITCASE?

STORY BOOK

STORY BOARD AND ANIMALS

STICK PUPPETS

BAKING PAN AND CORN BREAD MIX

# JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

## POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES

READ THE STORY

HAVE CHILD RETELL STORY

TELL THE STORY WITH CUT-OUTS

MAKE A BEAN BAG

PLANT A BEAN

## WHAT'S IN THE SUITCASE?

STORYBOOK JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

STORY CUT-OUTS

BEANS, FABRIC, AND GLUE

BEAN, PLASTIC GLASS, PAPER TOWEL

# THE THREE BEARS

## POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES

READ THE STORY

RETELL THE STORY USING THE STORY BOARD, THE THREE BEARS AND GOLDILOCKS

USE THE MAGNETIC CUT-OUTS TO TELL THE STORY

IDENTIFY WHICH BOWL WOULD BELONG TO FATHER BEAR, MOTHER BEAR, AND BABY BEAR

## WHAT'S IN THE SUITCASE?

STORY BOOK

STORYBOARD AND STORY FIGURES

MAGNETIC STORY CUT-OUTS

THREE BOWLS

# NURSERY RHYMES

## POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES

READ RHYMES

HAVE CHILD REPEAT RHYMES

HAVE CHILD IDENTIFY RHYMES BY PICTURE OR OBJECT

SORT PICTURE CARDS BY RHYME

FIND THE RHYMES IN THE PICTURE

## WHAT'S IN THE SUITCASE?

STORYBOOKS
MATCHING RHYME CARDS
FLANNEL MATERIAL
PROPS
MAGNETIC NURSERY RHYME CHARACTERS
DISCUSSION PICTURES

# Math

## Suitcase #1 Numbers

Scatter pattern board game
Number board game
Sandpaper numerals, 1-5
Paper
Peeled crayons
Craft sticks with set patterns
Board to match craft sticks
Picture set cards, 1-5
Number/set cards, 1-5

Books: Bears On Wheels
Honey Bear Board Book Numbers

## Suitcase #2 Colors

Color concentration game
Board Game
Cellophane spy glasses
Cellophane pieces
Bottle caps
Plastic lids

Book: Is It Red? Is It Yellow? Is It Blue?

## Suitcase #3 Shapes

Shape matching game
Shape sorting game
Magnetic shapes
Shape domino game
Variety of construction paper shapes
Glue
Paper

Book: Honey Bear Board Book Shapes

Suitcase #4 Patterns

Teddy Bear Match (bears have matching patterns)
Patterning boards
Bottle caps (to follow patterns on boards)
Buttons
Container for sorting buttons
Stamp pad
Stamps
Roll of register tape

Book: Dots, Spots, Speckles, And Stripes

NUMBERS

POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES

READ THE STORIES

PLAY BOARD GAMES

DO CRAYON RUBBINGS
OF THE NUMBERS

MATCH NUMBER PATTERN
STICKS

WHAT'S IN THE SUITCASE?

NUMBER GAME

PATTERN GAME

PATTERN STICKS

STORY BOOKS

NUMBER SET CARDS

SANDPAPER NUMBER CARDS
CRAYONS AND PAPER

# COLORS

## POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES

READ STORY BOOK

HAVE CHILD TELL STORY TO YOU

USE PAPER MAGNIFYING GLASSES TO MAKE NEW COLORS

PLAY COLOR CONCENTRATION

PLAY COLOR BOARD GAME

SORT PIECES ACCORDING TO COLORS IN LIDS

## WHAT'S IN THE SUITCASE?

STORY BOOK

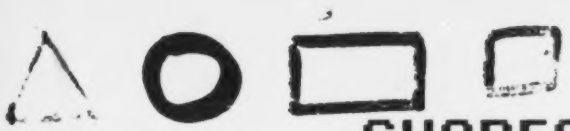
PAPER MAGNIFYING GLASSES

CONCENTRATION GAME

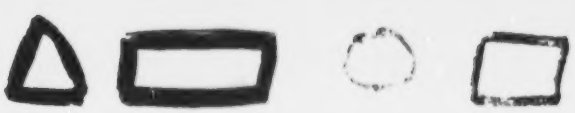
BOARD GAME

LIDS AND PIECES

Color Sticks



# SHAPES



## POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES

READ SHAPE STORY BOOK

SORT SHAPES

PLAY SHAPE MATCH GAME

PLAY SHAPE DOMINO GAME

MAKE A PICTURE USING SHAPES

SORT MAGNETIC SHAPES

## WHAT'S IN THE SUITCASE?

STORY BOOK

SHAPE GAME

SHAPE BOX

SHAPE DOMINOES

MAGNETIC SHAPES

# PATTERNS

## POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES

MATCH TEDDY BEAR BOY AND GIRL

SORT AND MATCH BUTTONS

MAKE A PATTERN WITH THE BUTTONS

PLAY PATTERN BOARD GAME

MAKE YOUR OWN PATTERNS WITH STAMPS

## WHAT'S IN THE SUITCASE?

TEDDY BEAR PAIRS

TRAY AND BUTTONS

PATTERN BOARD GAMES

STAMPS, STAMP PAD, AND ROLL OF PAPER

# SCIENCE

## Suitcase 1 MAGNETS

Magnetic letters and numbers
Small fruit shaped magnets for sorting
Small horseshoe shaped magnet
Magnetic Fish Game

Experiment #1
Clear plastic cup
Paper clips
Put water in the cup. Drop in the clip.
Move the clip around in the cup by moving the magnet around the outside of the cup.

Experiment #2
Index card
Clip
Put clip on the top of the index card. Move the clip around on the card by moving the magnet around under the card.

Book: Mickey's Magnet

## Suitcase #2 SINK/FLOAT

Various objects to put in water (bottle caps, foam bits, toothpicks, sea shells, bits-o-wood, clips, rocks, etc.).
Two water containers
Sponge
Baster
Glue
Sink/Float chart (Children can glue objects on the chart according to what they do, sink or float.)

Book: Helping Your Child Learn Science

## Suitcase #3 ANIMALS

Animal lotto games
Matching animal outlines games
Matching pair cards

Concentration animal cards
Match mother to baby cards
Matching pairs of wooden animal figures
Animal cookies

Books: My Home
Hello Farm Animals
The Baby Animal Book
The Zoo Book
Zoo Animals

Suitcase #4 SENSES

Matched cannisters for sound (3 pairs - salt, rice, paper clip)
Cannisters for scent (4 - perfume, cinnamon, lemon, vanilla)
Large discussion pictures of children using senses
Glue
Rough/Smooth/Hard/Soft Chart (Children can glue objects to the chart according to the tactile characteristic.)

Book: My Bunny Feels Soft

# MAGNETS

## POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES

READ "MICKEY'S MAGNET"

TRY SOME OF MICKEY'S TRICKS

SORT THE MAGNETIC SHAPES

PLAY "GO FISH"

DO THE EXPERIMENTS

## WHAT"S IN THE SUITCASE?

FISHING POLE AND FISH

MAGNETIC LETTERS AND SHAPES

MAGNETS

PLASTIC CUP AND CLIP

INDEX CARD AND CLIP

# SINK OR FLOAT

## POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES

---

FILL CONTAINER WITH WATER

SEE WHAT WILL FLOAT

SEE WHAT WILL SINK

FIND THINGS IN THE HOUSE TO EXPERIMENT WITH

USE SPONGE TO TAKE WATER FROM ONE CONTAINER TO ANOTHER

USE BASTER TO TRANSFER WATER

GLUE OBJECTS ON THE CHART UNDER SINK OR FLOAT

WHAT'S IN THE SUITCASE?

---

SINK-FLOAT CHART, GLUE

SMALL OBJECTS TO SINK OR FLOAT

WATER CONTAINERS

SPONGE

BASTER

# ANIMALS

## POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES

READ THE ANIMAL STORY BOOKS

IDENTIFY THE ANIMALS

TALK ABOUT WHERE THE ANIMALS LIVE

TALK ABOUT WHAT THEY EAT

TALK ABOUT HOW THEY MOVE

PLAY THE ANIMAL LOTTO GAMES

PLAY ANIMAL CONCENTRATION

MATCH THE ANIMAL SHAPES

WHAT'S IN THE SUITCASE?

## ANIMAL CARDS

ANIMAL SHAPES

LOTTO GAMES

STORY BOOKS

# SENSES

HEARING, SEEING, TASTING,
TOUCHING AND SMELLING

POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES

---

MATCH THE SOUNDS

IDENTIFY SMELLS

WHAT CAN YOU SEE

TALK ABOUT THE FOODS YOU EAT

TALK ABOUT HOW THINGS FEEL

MAKE A CHART ABOUT HARD, SOFT,
ROUGH AND SMOOTH THINGS

WHAT'S IN THE SUITCASE?

---

SOUND CANNISTERS
SMELLING CANNISTERS
CHART PAPER
SOFT,HARD, ROUGH, SMOOTH OBJECTS

# Art

## Suitcase #1 Painting

Paper
Paintbrushes
Small bottles of paint
Roller bottles of paint

Book: Colors

## Suitcase #2 Collage

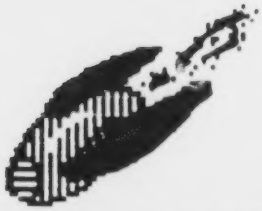
Large sheets of newsprint
Glue
Scraps of all kinds( fabric, wallpaper,
bits-o-wood, yarn, magazines, foam pieces)
Crayons
Markers
Scissors

## Suitcase #3 Puppets

Paper bags
Paper scraps
Glue
Yarn
Fabric scraps
Markers
Crayons
Scissors
Masking tape

## Suitcase #4 Playdough

Koolaid playdough
Cookie cutters
Rolling pin



PAINTING.....PAINTING.....PAINTING

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

PUT A LITTLE RED AND YELLOW PAINT IN A PLASTIC BAGGIE. SEAL THE BAG. MIX THE PAINT AROUND. WHAT HAPPENED?

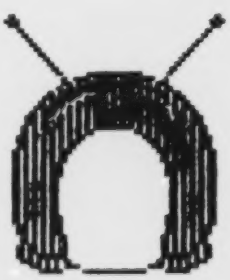
PUT A LITTLE RED AND BLUE PAINT IN A BAGGIE. MIX. WHAT HAPPENED?

PUT A LITTLE YELLOW AND BLUE IN A BAGGIE. WHAT COLOR DID YOU GET?

PAINT A PICTURE. USE THE BRUSHES OR THE ROLLER BOTTLES.

## WHAT'S IN THE SUITCASE?

PAPER
3 BRUSHES
PAINT



## COLLAGE

MAKE A PICTURE USING WHAT'S IN THE SUITCASE.

CUT, PASTE, TEAR, COLOR.....

DO WHATEVER YOU CAN THINK OF USING WHAT'S IN THE SUITCASE.

WHAT IS IN THE SUITCASE?

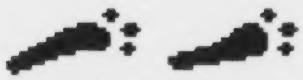
YARN PIECES
FOAM BITS
WALLPAPER SAMPLES
WOOD AND STICKS
STRAWS AND PAPER SCRAPS
PAPER, GLUE, CRAYONS, MARKERS, SCISSORS AND TAPE

**********

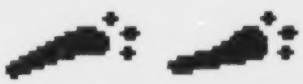
PLEASE RETURN THE UNUSED TAPE, GLUE, CRAYONS, MARKERS AND SCISSORS.

YOU CAN KEEP ALL THE REST OF THE SUPPLIES TO MAKE A PICTURE ANOTHER DAY.

## MAKE A PUPPET

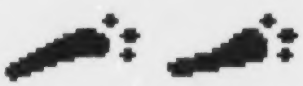


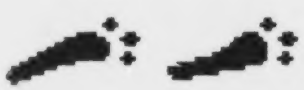
USE WHAT'S IN THE SUITCASE TO MAKE A PUPPET.

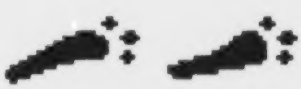


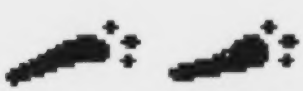
WHAT'S IN THE SUITCASE ?

PAPER BAGS
FABRIC SCRAPS
STRAWS
YARN
CONSTRUCTION PAPER
MASKING TAPE
CRAYONS
MARKERS
SCISSORS
GLUE



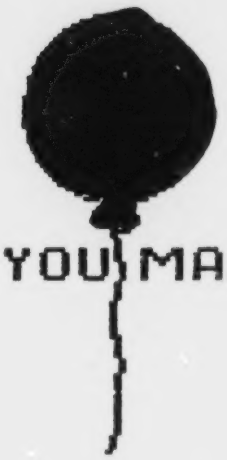






**********
PLEASE RETURN UNUSED TAPE, GLUE, CRAYONS, MARKERS AND SCISSORS.

KEEP THE REST OF THE SUPPLIES TO MAKE A PUPPET ON ANOTHER DAY.



## KOOLAID PLAYDOUGH

WHAT KIND OF SHAPES CAN YOU MAKE WITH THE PLAYDOUGH?

CAN YOU MAKE A SNAKE?

CAN YOU MAKE A PIZZA?

WHAT CAN YOU MAKE?

USE THE COOKIE CUTTERS AND THE ROLLER TO MAKE SHAPES.

### KOOLAID PLAYDOUGH
(IN CASE YOU WANT TO MAKE SOME OF YOUR OWN PLAYDOUGH!)

2 1/2 CUPS OF FLOUR
1/2 CUP SALT
2 PKGS. UNSWEETENED KOOLAID
3 TBLS. OIL
2 CUPS BOILING WATER

MIX DRY INGREDIENTS, ADD OIL AND WATER. STIR QUICKLY. MIX WELL WITH HANDS WHEN COOL TO THE TOUCH. REFRIGERATE WHEN NOT USING IN A CLOSED PLASTIC CONTAINER.

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